

Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland
Meeting: Monday 19 March 2018, Thistle House, Edinburgh

MINUTES

Present:

Mrs Nicola Gordon, Chairing Member
Dr Michael Ewart
Mrs Alison Mitchell
Mrs Deirdre Fulton
Ms Neelam Bakshi
Mr James McNeill, QC
Professor Stephen Tierney
The Hon Lady Wise
Mr Alistair Morris
The Hon Lord Minginish
Sheriff Principal Derek Pyle

Attended:

Mrs Erica Clarkson, Chief Executive
Ms Ashleigh Meikle, Board Secretary and Court Appointments Manager
Mr John Wallace, Tribunal Appointments and Governance Manager
Miss Rachel Craig, Appointments Team Leader
Miss Katy Mitchell, Administrator

Scarlet Barber, Huddle Presentation

Apologies:

Sheriff Michael O'Grady, QC

1. Minute of the JABS Board Meeting of 19 February 2018

1.1 The minute from the previous meeting was agreed.

2. Matters Arising and Action Tracker

2.1 There were no outstanding actions from the last meeting.

2.2 The Board reviewed the Action Tracker and agreed that it would be helpful if it summarised agreed actions from previous Board meetings, any subsequent actions, outcomes and results. The Secretariat will make the necessary amendments. It was agreed that this would be a working document only and not published online.

3. Chairing Member and Chief Executive Updates

3.1 The Chairing Member informed the Board of progress on stakeholder engagement and reported that she had met with Scottish Government colleagues in order to move forward on the recruitment of new Board members. The Chairing Member will continue to keep the Board abreast of developments as the recruitment process develops.

3.2 The Board discussed planning for the upcoming senator recruitment round. The Lord President will be consulted on how best to engage potential applicants and an update brought to the Board at a future meeting. It was agreed that planning for this round should be completed by 10 June with proposals taken to the Board for approval in advance.

3.3 The Chairing Member and the Chief Executive reported to the Board that they had recently met with all of the Sheriff Principals at their quarterly meeting. The discussion had been very helpful and again highlighted the need for a rolling programme of recruitment. It was agreed that engagement with the Sheriff Principals should be ongoing.

3.4 The Chairing Member informed the Board that she had enjoyed a fruitful meeting with the Faculty of Advocates and that she had attended the Sheriff Association's Bi-Annual Conference in Dunkeld.

3.5 Following a discussion on the developing Skills Matrix, the Board agreed that it would be helpful to organise a development session on Unconscious Bias.

Chief Executive Update

3.6 The Board was informed that the Summary Sheriff recruitment round had attracted 174 applications. The Board noted that no QCs had applied.

3.7 The Chief Executive provided the Board with a report on her introductory stakeholder meetings and a forward look at future appointments - including the Faculty of Advocates and Glasgow Sheriff Court.

3.8 The Chief Executive informed the Board that she had organised an Away Day for the Secretariat. This would focus on team building and new ways of working.

3.9 An update was provided on the Board's Public Face project. Work is progressing well on all three strands of the project - the web build, brand identity and research. Ongoing updates will be provided as activity moves forward.

4. Summary Sheriff Benchmarking Discussion (JABS 2018 13)

4.1 Deirdre Fulton led a discussion regarding benchmarking for the Summary Sheriff recruitment round. Scoring comparisons were made and agreement reached on best practice in terms of marking.

5. Sheriff Recommendation (JABS 2018 2014)

5.1 On 8 March 2018, the Board received a formal request from Scottish Ministers for recommendation of appointment of one individual from the Sheriff reserve list. The Board were informed that a vacancy had arisen within the sheriffdom of South Strathclyde, Dumfries and Galloway.

6. Monthly Budget Report (JABS 2018 12)

6.1 The Board considered a paper on the financial position to the end of February 2018. The Chief Executive reported that there would be no underspend at the end of the 2017/18 financial year. Monies are still to be recovered from SCTS in respect of the Health and Education Chamber.

6.2 The Board discussed an indicative budget for financial year 2018/19. The Chief Executive informed the Board that a detailed paper regarding future spend allocations will be produced in short course - once a full analysis of the previous year has been completed.

7. Any Other Business and Forward Look

7.1. The Chief Executive informed the Board of future meetings with key stakeholders including the Scottish Government and the Judicial Office. The Board were informed that May Dunsmuir had kindly offered to deliver a learning session on the operation of the Additional Support Needs Tribunal.

7.2 Following a brief discussion regarding future activity, the Secretariat agreed to provide a broad timeframe outlining the transfer of tribunals - once this information is received from Scottish Government colleagues.

7.3 In closing the meeting, the Chairing Member once again wished Sheriff O'Grady well in his recovery.

8. Presentation from Scarlet Barber

8.1 Ms Barber joined the meeting at 12:30pm via WebEx to provide the Board with an overview of Huddle, highlighting its functions and features.

9. Date of the Next Meeting

9.1 Monday 23 April 2018 in Thistle House, Edinburgh.